

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1842

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 08435

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: UK, RH, SF

SUBJECT: RHODESIA: FURTHER FCO COMMENT ON MEETINGS WITH
ANC LEADERS

REF: LONDON 8303

1. DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY AT FCO ALAN CAMPBELL ON JULY
5 GAVE EMBOFF FURTHER RUNDOWN ON TALKS BETWEEN ANC
DELEGATION LED BY DR. ELLIOTT GABELLAH AND PRIME MINISTER
WILSON AND FON SEC CALLAGHAN (REFTEL)./ IN TELLING BRI-
TISH LEADERS ABOUT RECENT TALKS WITH IAN SMITH, GABELLAH
SAID TALKS WERE PHONY IN THAT SMITH POSITION BASED
ENTIRELY ON 1971 PROPOSALS WHICH AFRICANS HAD ALREADY
REJECTED. SMITH OFFER OF SIX ADDITIONAL SEATS WAS PURE
GAMESMANSHIP. IN FACE OF ANC DESPONDENCY, UK LEADERS
SUGGESTED AFRICANS WAIT UNTIL AFTER JULY 30 ELECTIONS IN
RHODESIA AND THEN SEE IF TALKS MIGHT BE STARTED AGAIN.
ANC LEADERS AGREED THERE JUST MIGHT BE SOME SLIGHT HOPE
AT THAT TIME.

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2. ON SMITH'S PROPOSAL FOR ROUND-TABLE CONFERENCE (PARA 3 REFTEL), ANC LEADERS ASKED BRITISH TO FIND SOME WAY TO MAKE CLEAR TO WHITE ELECTORATE IN RHODESIA, MANY OF WHOM WANT SETTLEMENT WITH AFRICANS, WHY SMITH PROPOSAL IS ALSO A PHONY GESTURE. BRITISH AGREED AND ADDED THAT ARREST OF EDSON SITHOLE WAS STRANGE WAY FOR SMITH TO ACT IN FACE OF HIS ROUND-TABLE PROPOSAL.

3. ANC LEADERS ALSO ASKED BRITISH TO CALL A CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE OF ALL INTERESTED PARTIES TO DISCUSS A SETTLEMENT. THEY WERE NOT CLEAR ON DETAILS AS TO WHO WOULD PARTICIPATE, WHERE CONFERENCE WOULD BE HELD, ETC. BRITISH MENTIONED FOR INSTANCE WHETHER ZANU AND ZAPU REPRESENTATIVES SHOULD BE INVITED AND IF SO WHETHER ANC LEADERS THOUGHT SMITH WOULD THEN PARTICIPATE. CAMPBELL SAID BRITISH NOT OPPOSED TO ROUND-TABLE CONFERENCE IN PRINCIPLE BUT ANC WOULD HAVE TO THINK THE PROPOSAL THROUGH IN GREATER DETAIL BEFORE BRITISH COULD MAKE DECISION. IN ANY EVENT, CAMPBELL SAID ONE THING BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD PROBABLY NEVER DO AGAIN IS TO MAKE ANY CONCRETE PROPOSALS THEMSELVES FOR SETTLEMENT ON CONSTITUTIONAL BASIS.

4. FCO IS NOW PLANNING FOR GOVERNMENT STATEMENT IN HOUSE OF COMMONS, PROBABLY NEXT WEEK, SPELLING OUT HMG'S ATTITUDE TOWARD ROUND-TABLE CONFERENCE ALONG LINES DESIRED BY ANC AND ALSO ON CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE.

5. WHEN ASKED ABOUT STORY IN THE GUARDIAN ON JULY 5 CLAIMING THAT PRIME MINISTER HAD WITHDRAWN ALL PREVIOUS RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT OFFERS, CAMPBELL SAID GUARDIAN STORY COMPLETELY WRONG. SEVENTY-ONE PROPOSALS HAVE BEEN OVERTAKEN BY EVENTS BUT CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THESE PROPOSALS WOULD PROBABLY BE INCORPORATED IN ANY FINAL SETTLEMENT WHENEVER IT MAY BE REACHED. ANNENBERG

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